

Topcroft Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING *Topcroft Pavilion* Monday 10th July 2023 - 7.30pm

Attended: Councillors Step Dye (Vice Chair) , Nicola Eastell, Robin Frampton, Trevor Potter & Kathy Thomson

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also present: One parishioner

PUBLIC FORUM

A. To Receive Reports from the County and District Councillors

County Councillor Barry Stone and District Councillor Martyn Hooton sent apologies and reports:

<https://topcroftpc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/category/meetings>

B. Public Forum – for Members of the Public

None

MINUTES

1. To Approve Apologies for Absence

[Apologies were Approved and Accepted from Cllr Rout.](#)

Cllr Dye Chaired the meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests and Consider Requests for Dispensation

None

3. To Approve the Minutes and Decisions from the Meeting held on Monday 22nd May 2023

[The Minutes from the Meeting held on 22nd May 2023 were confirmed unanimously as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.](#)

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes not on the Agenda

None

5. To Consider Co-option to fill the Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council

None

Cllr Dye said the vacancy was advertised on the noticeboards and said he would circulate the vacancy on Topcroft's Social Club mailing list. The Clerk confirmed it was on TPCs website.

Action: SD

6. Finance

a) To Consider the Internal Auditor's Report 2022/23 Recommendations & Comments

The RFO circulated an action plan based on the Internal Auditors Recommendations & Comments (*attached*). Cllrs discussed Section 3 - Councils involvement in property relating to the affairs of the Church.

[Councillors approved the RFOs suggested actions and asked the RFO to forward NALCs Information regarding Section 3.](#)

Action: RFO

b) Internal Auditor for 2023-24 – update

The RFO advised SALC will be taking bookings from January 2024 and will book TPCs internal auditor as approved at the May meeting.

c) To Receive the Financial & Budget Reports and Approve the Income & Expenditure

The Chair signed the bank statement.

Signed

Date

Topcroft Parish Council

Councillors resolved unanimously to Approve the following Receipts and Expenditure:

Date	Ref.	Income	Receipts	Payments
28/05/2023	S/O	Clerk's Salary - May		£ 135.42
14/06/2023	S/O	ICO - Data Protection		£ 35.00
28/06/2023	S/O	Clerk's Salary - June		£ 135.42
10/07/2023	100557	Clerk's Expenses June & July		£ 12.00
		Total	£ -	£ 317.84
		Total Earmarked Reserves	£ 1,809.72	
		General Reserve	£ 1,959.15	
		Total	£ 3,768.87	

d) To Consider a Dog Waste Bin at the Topcroft Street/Barford Road

Cllrs discussed the above and the RFO informed SNC had charged in 2022/23 £220 to empty the two dog bins in Topcroft.

Councillors agreed unanimously to purchase a dog waste bin advertised for £115.68 using CIL money, if NCC Highways approved the location.

Action: Clerk

e) To Consider a Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Sunday

Councillors resolved unanimously to re-use last year's poppy wreath, if in a good condition and donate the cost £19.99 to RBL. If unusable the RFO will order a new one for £19.99 ex. delivery.

Action: SD to advise

7. Planning Applications and Decisions (circulated as received)

Applications

a) 2023/1719 Erection of dwelling, including landscaping and new access

Location: Land North Of Aquarium Topcroft Street Topcroft Norfolk

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Status: Pending Consideration

Councillors Supported the above application with no comments.

Cllrs noted the following applications and decisions:

b) Replacement of existing canopy porch to north elevation of property

Church Farm Church Road Topcroft Norfolk NR35 2BH

Ref. No: 2023/1541 | Received: Fri 02 Jun 2023 | Validated: Fri 02 Jun 2023

Status: Pending Consideration

c) Outline Planning Permission for a New Dwelling with Separate Garage

With all matters reserved except for access (revised from 2021/1392)

Location: Land West of Mill Road Topcroft Norfolk

Ref 2022/2230 | Application Type: Outline Planning Permission

Status: Pending Consideration

Councillors agreed to OBJECT (carried) to this planning application with comments at the 5th December 2022 Meeting.

d) Conversion of ex USAAF barrack buildings to single dwelling

Breakers Yard Barford Road Topcroft Norfolk NR35 2BB

Ref. No: 2022/1960 | Received: Sun 16 Oct 2022 | Validated: Fri 21 Oct 2022

Status: Pending Consideration

Councillors resolved to SUPPORT this planning application with no comments at the 14th November 2022 Meeting.

Signed

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Decisions

a) Low Farm Snakes Lane Topcroft Norfolk NR35 2BU

Proposal: Change of use from holiday accommodation (2016/1763) to residential C3 including alterations to curtilage and boundary treatments.

Ref. No: 2023/1157 | Received: Thu 27 Apr 2023 | Validated: Thu 27 Apr 2023 Status: Refusal

b) Non-Material Amendment to planning permission 2023/0119 - Minor changes to west elevation, retain existing bi-fold doors and substitute proposed bi-fold doors for window same width and head height as approved

Hill Farm Cottage Rectory Road Topcroft Norfolk NR35 2BT

Ref. No: 2023/1286 | Received: Tue 09 May 2023 | Validated: Tue 09 May 2023 | Status: Decided

c) Updated Farm Yard from Hard Core to Concrete

Chimney Farm Yard Denton Road Topcroft Norfolk NR35 2BA

Ref. No: 2023/0396 | Received: Tue 21 Feb 2023 | Validated: Mon 27 Feb 2023

Status: Prior Approval not Required

8. Village Issues

a) Highways

- Drains/Potholes/Gullies/Issues

Cllrs reported:

- Large Pothole near Manor Farm

Action: Clerk

- King's Road large gorge in road

Action: RF

- Church Road Water Leak

Cllrs informed there was still a leak.

- Hedge Cutting around Bus Shelter

Cllr Potter informed he could no longer maintain the hedge and an alternative hedge cutter will be sought.

Action: NE

b) Footpaths

Cllr Frampton advised he had reported the fallen footpath sign on Wash Lane.

c) Village Gate – update

Cllr Potter advised the new no dog sign and plaques has been affixed to the gate and will forward a photograph.

Action: TP

d) Village Asset Maintenance – update

Cllrs discussed the village assets and agreed:

Cllr Dye to clean the dog bins, footpath noticeboard and defibrillator cabinet and put-up the defibrillator signs.

Action: SD

Cllr Potter will stain the two noticeboards and the Topcroft & Bedingham 1995 sign

Action: TP

The bus shelter and benches also need attention – c/f

e) Litter Picking

Cllr Frampton advised his wife had litter picked Rectory Lane and Kings Road collection a large sack of rubbish.

9. To Note Correspondence Received

None

10. AOB (For discussion only – the Council cannot make decisions on non-agenda items)

a) Defibrillator Check & New Pads

The Clerk advised a Bungay Community First Responder has checked the battery and fitted the new pads.

b) Weight Restriction Sign

Cllr Potter reported a weight restriction sign missing at the end of Church Road/Topcroft Street.

Signed

Date

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The Clerk thought this had been reported before, but will investigate.

Action: Clerk

11. To Receive Items for the next Agenda

12. The Next Meeting Dates

- Monday 11th September 2023 - 7.30pm
- Monday 13th November 2023 - 7.30pm

The meeting ended at 8.24pm

Point 6.a)

SALC's Internal Audit Report for Topcroft Parish Council 2023

A review of the Internal Auditor's recommendations and comments made in the Financial Year ending 2023.

Section 2 – Financial Regulation and Standing Orders

Have Standing Orders been adopted, up to date and reviewed annually?

Yes. At the meeting of 7 March 2023 the Council carried out an annual review of its Standing Orders. Use of the Model Standing Orders (produced by NALC in 2018)

Comment: At the next review Council may wish to increase the procurement values (item 18 Financial Controls & Procurement) updated on 1 January 2022.

Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Comment:

The procurement values will be updated before the next policy review in March 2024 to the latest increase.

Are Financial Regulations up to date and reviewed annually?

Yes. At the meeting of 7 March 2023 the Council carried out an annual review of its Financial Regulations. Use of the Model Financial Regulations (produced by NALC in 2019)

Comment: At the next review Council may wish to review the Procurement amendments (SI 2022/1390) of the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2022 which came into force on 21 December 2022 and make the changes to the contract value limits from £25,000 to £30,000.

RFO Comment:

The procurement values will be updated before the next policy review in March 2024 to the latest increase.

Section 3 – Payment controls

Is there supporting paperwork for payments with appropriate authorisation?

Yes. The Council complies with its Financial Regulations and a sample of payments confirmed they were supported by invoices. At each full Council Meeting a list of all payments is presented to the meeting with formal approval of such expenditure being shown in the minutes and evidence of such paperwork in the files submitted for internal audit. A sample taken shows that the Council had the legal power to approve payments, however:

Comment: Councils should be aware that powers in the Local Government Act 1894 prohibits Council's involvement in property relating to the affairs of the Church e.g. the maintenance or improvement of buildings or land or contributing to costs.

RFO Comment:

Cllrs have in the past been advised of the above.

Section 14 – Additional Information

Signed

Date

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Is there evidence that Minutes are administered in accordance with legislation?

Yes. The Council's minutes are well presented and provide clear evidence of the decisions taken by the Council during the year. The minutes were not seen as a virtual audit was carried out. Full Council minutes clearly document the approval of the previous minutes and that they are duly signed. Council shows good practice by approving and accepting any apologies.

Comment: Council may wish to include the public session within the framework of the meeting.

RFO Comment:

I have always been taught the public session is separate to the council meeting.

Is the Council compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation requirements?

Partly met Council has taken steps to ensure compliancy with the GDPR requirements and is aware that this should be monitored at all times to ensure compliancy. The Council's Privacy Notices were seen on the parish council's website. Council has completed the following documents which are also available to view on the Council's website: Data Protection Regulations Policy.

Comment: To ensure compliancy with the GDPR requirements Council may wish to ensure the information in their policies covers: Data Protection Impact Assessments and Data Protection & Information Management; Subject Access Requests & Subject Access Procedures; Data Retention and Disposal.

RFO Comment:

I will look for a suitable policy to cover the above requirements.